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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 001597

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: UPON ANNOUNCEMENT BY OSD-ASD (PA)

TAGS: [MARR](#) [PREL](#) [NL](#)

SUBJECT: BASE REALIGNMENT - ROUND 31 CONSULTATIONS

REF: STATE 101373

Classified By: Mary Daly for reasons 1.5 (B) & (D)

1. (S) Per reftel we notified the GONL of our desire to begin consultations on facilities in Brunssum and Vriezenveen. In response, the NL Ministry of Defense requested face-to-face consultations to be conducted with MG van der List, Director for Personal and Organization, Royal Netherlands Army. Following these consultations, the GONL responded formally via letter to ODC Chief Col. Rumohr. Text follows.

12. (S) BEGIN TEXT: Pursuant to what we discussed on 6 June, this is to inform you about our points of view with regard to the intended closure of the APS sites in The Netherlands by the United States of America:

The Netherlands Ministry of Defense is aware of the fact that the reduction of APS activities has been going on for a number of years and that possible consequences for the Dutch sites could be anticipated.

The 30 September 2003 closure date as mentioned in the "note verbale" deviates from that stated in article VIII of the General Arrangement concerning storage in the Netherlands by US Forces with regard to the notification period in case of a closure. In accordance with this agreement, a 12-month notification period should be observed.

If the APS sites at Brunssum and Vriezenveen will be closed, the Wainwright-Volkers agreement will be applicable.

In view of the projected personnel reductions in the Netherlands Ministry of Defense as well as the present labor market situation, job opportunities for employees who will become excess as a result of the closure of the APS sites will be very limited and consequently lead to high termination costs.

Although it may be expected that the APS activities at Brunssum and Vriezenveen will be discontinued in the long term, you are requested to include the possibility of keeping the sites operational for a few years in your decision making process in connection with rebuilding the APS site at Livorno, Italy and the sites to be built in Eastern Europe. Furthermore I have been informed that both sites are already included in the planning for 2004.

We have learned from CECE sources that operational maintenance of materiel returning from the Balkan area and Iraq will produce a workload for the Brunssum and Vriezenveen sites in 2004 and possibly in the years thereafter. Also, work that is presently contracted to commercial companies could provide work. It is noted that these tasks could be performed by the APS sites at a much lower cost. You are requested to include these terms in your considerations as well.

It is important to end the uncertainty for the employees and to provide clarity if and when subject sites will be closed, soon. Also, possible alternative duties as well as the duration of this workload should be looked at and made known.

We prefer a transition period of three years, in which a decision with regard to the future should be made after two years. During this period the regular workforce could be decreased while necessary maintenance capacity could be kept on standard with temporary employees. With regard to the reduction in force of actual redundant employees additional measures in relation to the Wainwright-Volkers agreement should be considered.

If work of a temporary nature (temporary APS, operational maintenance, or any other work of temporary nature) would only become available for either one of subject sites, we prefer to keep the Vriezenveen site open as the job opportunities for the Brunssum workforce are better. The AFINORTH organization has shown an interest in utilizing the Brunssum site, including a part of the workforce. Besides, the projected expansion of the Eygelshoven APS would create job opportunities for excess employees of the Brunssum site.

Signed A. van der List Major General, Director for Personnel and Organisation Royal Netherlands Army. END TEXT

SOBEL